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## Preface

# Electron/proton coupling in biological energy transduction

António Xavier was an outstanding scientist but his legacy goes far beyond his research. António Xavier's heritage is alive and present through all entrepreneurial activities he succeeded in. He built a school and achieved the clustering of many young group leaders in the creation of the Instituto de Tecnologia Química e Biológica (ITQB), some of them coming from abroad. He rose the funding and steered a whole new Institute that fostered biochemistry in Portugal in an unprecedented way. ITQB became the home and the nest of a community of researchers of many different areas in biochemistry and closely related disciplines, from *in silico* to *in vivo*. Still now, stimulated by António Xavier and his vision, many young PIs have at ITQB their opportunity to start their independent groups, where they thrive; a clear evidence that António Xavier's bet on youth was not in vain.

António Xavier was an active member of the Portuguese Biochemical Society. His motivation and enthusiastic words encouraged others to start a section that could gather all physical biochemists. I witnessed this process closely and I can testify how strong he was in motivating other people. "Molecular bio-

physics" is now the largest and the most active section of the Portuguese Biochemical Society.

The Portuguese Biochemical Society is proud of António Xavier and all those whom, with him, contributed to the advancement of biochemistry in Portugal. Among these, I highlight Miguel Teixeira, editor of this special issue of FEBS Letters, and I thank him for helping the Portuguese Biochemical Society preserving and honouring the memory of António Xavier in many occasions.

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